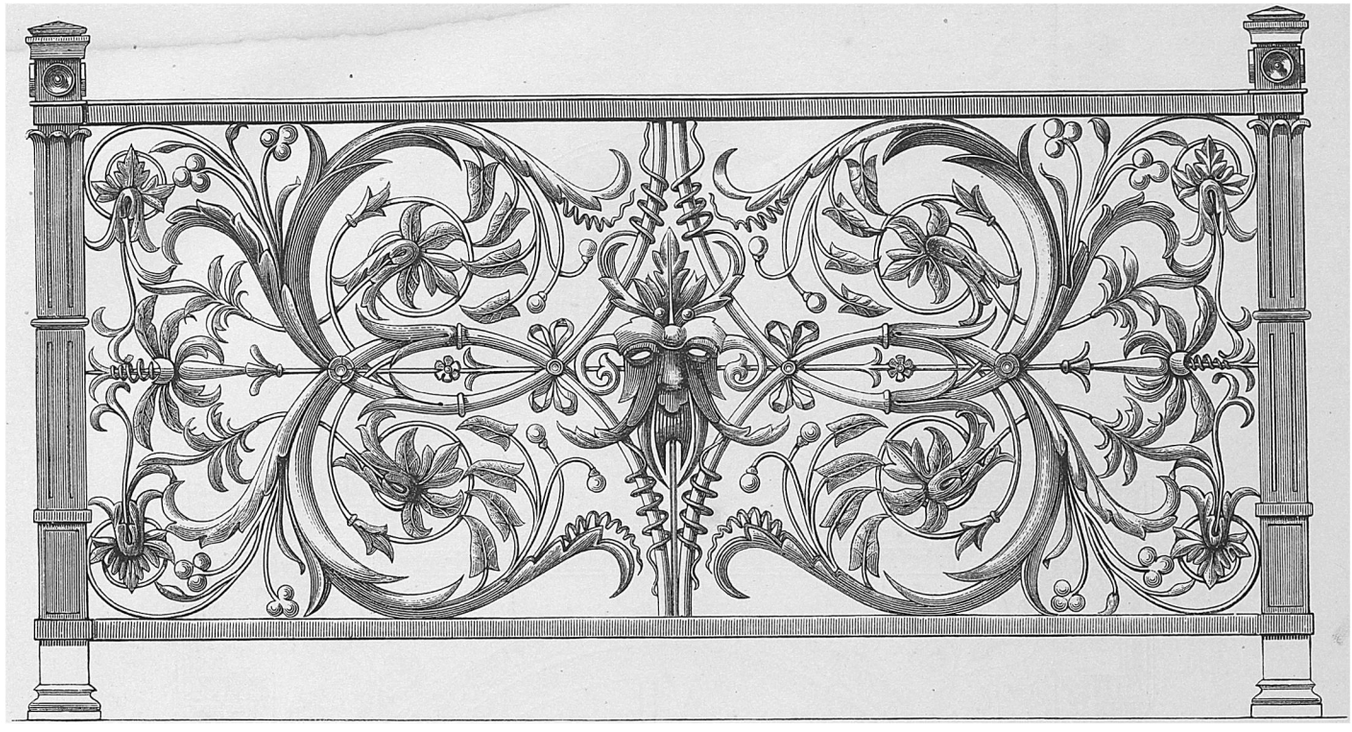

No. 26.

No. 26. Wrought Iron Balcony Railing, manufactured by Mr. Ed. Puls, Berlin.

VARIOUS.

Incombustible Timber.

In the *Neues Jahrbuch für Pharmacie*, Mr. Reinsch states that, having been requested to report to a fire insurance company about the best means of preventing timber bursting into flame, he experimented with various salts, and at last came to the conclusion as the result of his experiments, that impregnating timber with a concentrated solution of rock-salt is as good, if not better, a preservative against its bursting into flame as water-glass (silicate of soda), while the price of the former salt is, of course, only a mere trifle; moreover, rock-salt thus applied to timber is a preservative against dry rot and noxious insects. The author recommends the use of salt water, that is to say, a solution of rock-salt of moderate strength for the use of fire-engines during a fire as by far more effective than water; but in order that the salt should not injure the working parts of the engines, they will immediately afterwards have to be played with fresh water again.

Chinese Gold-Lacquer.

The gold-lacquer lining of a Chinese cabinet in the Museum at Cassel pealed off, and thus gave Dr. Wiederhold the opportunity of studying the composition of this substance. On examining it he found particles of tinfoil attached to the lacquer, so he comes to the conclusion that this material formed the ground upon which the lacquer varnish was laid. His attempts to imitate the varnish were perfectly successful, and he gives the following directions for the preparation of a composition which closely resembles the true Chinese article. First of all, two parts of copal and one of shellac are to be melted together to form a perfectly fluid mixture, then two parts of good boiled oil, made hot, are to be added; the vessel is then to be removed from the fire, and ten parts of oil of turpentine of gum gutta for yellow, and dragon's blood for red are to be mixed in sufficient quantity to give the shades desired.

Green Wood.

A new method for drying green wood in a very short time, it is said, consists in boiling it for some hours in water and leaving it then to cool, by which the soluble substances are removed. It is then boiled in an aqueous solution of borax, by which the insoluble albumen of the wood is rendered soluble, and escapes from the pores. The wood is then placed in drying-chambers, heated by steam, and allowed to remain three days. Wood thus treated is described as being more compact than it would be by ten years of ordinary exposure; as not shrinking, or warping, and as being secure against decay; on account of its greater density more easily polished, and better fitted for articles of furniture and musical instruments.

A New Gate.

A novel invention in the shape of a self-acting gate has been introduced, the construction of which is simple and ingenious. In driving up to the entrance the carriage-wheel passes over an iron, so connected by an underground rod with the hinges of the gate, that the latch end is elevated, and the top so inclined that the gate swings open by its own weight. The carriage in passing runs over a second wheel-iron, which causes the gate to close and securely latch. The movement is attended with no delay.

The Builder.

Iridium Black.

According to a recent author, iridium, as used in coloring glass and porcelain, gives a tint of such intense blackness, that if charcoal does not make a white mark upon it, all other blacks appear brown by the side of it.